



MACRORHINUS FRANKLINI: Gould

J. E. Mearns del. Inq.

J. E. Mearns del.

MACROPUS FRÆNATUS, *Gould.*

Bridled Kangaroo.

Spec. Char.—*Macropus vellere molli brevi, colore e fusco cinereo; corpore subtus albo; ab occipite utrinque super humeros lineâ angustâ albâ; interspatio occipiteque nigrescente: caudâ tuberculo parvo corneo pilis nigrescentibus abscondito ad apicem instructâ; tarsi artubusque anticis ferè albis, digitis pilis obscuris paucis adpersis.*

Descr.—Fur short and soft; general tint of the upper surface grey; under surface white; a white line diverges from the occiput on each side backwards over the shoulder, and passes into the white of the belly a little behind the insertion of the arms; the space between these lines is blackish brown, narrow at the occiput and gradually expanding as it approaches the shoulder, where the colour blends into the ordinary tint of the upper parts; tail mingled black and white, the black predominating on the upper and under surface of the extremity; on the chin a small dusky mark; legs whitish; upper surface of the feet mingled black and white; arms very pale grey, internally white; hands mingled black and white, tinged with brown on the fingers; inner surface of the ears white; a white mark from the tip of the muzzle to beneath the eye; on the sides of the neck a wash of rich cream colour.

	Male.		Female.	
	feet.	inches.	feet.	inches.
Length from the nose to the extremity of the tail	3	7½.	2	8½
„ of tail	1	7	1	3
„ „ tarsus and toes, including the nail		6½.		5
„ „ arm and hand, including the nails		5		4
„ „ face from the tip of the nose to the base of the ear		3¾.		3½
„ „ ear		3½.		3¼

Macropus frænatus, Gould in Proc. of Zool. Soc., Part VIII. p. 92.

This elegant little Kangaroo, whose weight varies from ten to fifteen pounds, is an inhabitant of the part of New Holland to the northward of the Liverpool Plains, and in all probability will hereafter be found to range over a great extent of country towards the central portion of Australia.

The paucity of information that has been obtained respecting the Kangaroos of the interior, particularly those so strikingly marked as the present species, is somewhat remarkable, considering the number of scientific men who have at different periods traversed various portions of the country which these animals inhabit: as far as I am aware, none of the works of Oxley, Sturt or Mitchell make the slightest mention of the one here represented. On arriving in the colony, skins of the animal were presented to me by Mr. Stephen and Mr. Charles Coxen, and I afterwards had the satisfaction of frequently meeting with it in a state of nature, and of gaining some information respecting its habits. The nearest point to the colony at which I encountered it was Brezi, on the river Mokai, whence it extended into the interior as far as I had an opportunity of proceeding. It inhabits all the low mountain-ranges similar to those of Brezi, whose elevation varies from one to five or six hundred feet, and which are of a sterile character—hot, dry, stony, and thinly covered with shrub-like stunted trees. These situations are also the abode of the *Halmaturus dorsalis*, with which I sometimes found the *Macropus frænatus* associating; but it differs from that species, which is strictly an inhabitant of the brushes, in frequenting the more open parts and occasionally even the plains. When started from its seat, which is formed like that of a hare, and sheltered by a tuft of grass or a small bush, it bounds away with remarkable fleetness, generally giving the best dogs a sharp run, and frequently effects its escape by gaining the thick part of the brush, or the hole of a decayed tree. And I recollect on one occasion, that on being sharply pressed, the animal mounted the inside of the tree, to an opening nearly fifteen feet from the ground, whence it leaped down before the dogs, and succeeded in reaching the hollow trunk of a fallen tree, from which it was finally taken by the hand.

In the neighbourhood of Brezi the natives hunt this species with dogs, and often kill it with spears, bommerengs and other weapons; but at Gundermein, on the Lower Namoi, I found myself among a tribe who succeed in capturing them with nets, which, although rudely constructed, are very well adapted to the purpose. On being made acquainted with my object, the tribe were easily induced to accompany me to the Brigaloe brush, in which the present species and the *Halmaturus dorsalis* were very abundant: arriving at the skirts of the brush, the oldest men of the tribe separated from the rest, each two taking a net about twenty-five yards long by three and a half feet wide, with which they proceeded to those parts where the runs of the animals were most frequent, while the rest of the natives entered the brush on the opposite side, to beat the bushes, and with loud shouts and yells drove the Kangaroos towards the nets: by this means in a single afternoon they obtained for me as many specimens as I required.

This animal always selecting dry ridges entirely devoid of water, is doubtless the reason of its being so little known, such localities being rarely visited by expeditions of discovery.

Its flesh, like that of the other small Kangaroos, is excellent, and when procurable was eaten by me in preference to other meat.

The female is considerably smaller in size, but is not distinguished by any difference in marking from the male; the stripes are quite as intense as in the male, and are even apparent in the fœtus.

Its food consists of grass and various kinds of herbage.